

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIEP-01 COME-00

EB-07 FPC-01 INT-05 OMB-01 SAM-01 OES-03 STR-04

TRSE-00 FRB-03 SNM-02 DEAE-00 JUSE-00 /116 W

----- 101261

R 290425Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9633

INFO CINCPAC

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK BY POUCH

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU BY POUCH

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI BY POUCH

AMCONSUL MANDALAY BY POUCH

USLO PEKING BY POUCH

AMCONSUL UDORN BY POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 RANGOON 1394

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, BM

SUBJECT: JOINT WEEKA #19

1. AMBASSADORIAL RESHUFFLE (UNCL)

GUB MAY 24 ANNOUNCED RECALL OF TEN AMBASSADORS, CONFIRMING EARLIER

REPORTS OF EXTENSIVE RESHUFFLE ABOUT TO BEGIN (WEEKA 18, ITEM 1).

THOSE RECALLED ARE EX-COL. THEIN DOKE (BELGRADE), EX-BRIG. AUNG

SHWE (PARIS), EX-COL. HLA MAW (KUALA LUMPUR), EX-COL. KYI HAN

(JAKARTA), EX-NAVY CAPT. CHIT KO KO (TOKYO), EX-COL. BA NI (TEL

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AVIV), U VUM KO HAU (PRAGUE), EX-COL. LWIN (WASHINGTON/NEW YORK),

EX-BRIG. MAUNG MAUNG (CANBERRA), AND EX-COL. CHIT MYAING (LONDON). FIVE OTHER AMBASSADORIAL POSTS (BONN, MANILA, MOSCOW, OTTAWA, ROME) ARE CURRENTLY VACANT. RETURN OF THE TEN AMBASSADORS WILL LEAVE GUB WITH ONLY SEVEN AMBASSADORS STILL ABROAD, ALL IN ASIA AND MIDDLE EAST.

COMMENT: (LOU) MOST OF THE TEN ARE EXPECTED TO BE RETIRED, THOUGH ONE OR TWO ARE RUMORED TO BE IN LINE FOR OTHER AMBASSADORIAL OR GOVERNMENT POSITIONS. NO REASONS ARE APPARENT FOR THE EXTENSIVE RESHUFFLE, WHICH IS PARTICULARLY UNUSUAL BECAUSE OF GUB FOREIGN MINISTRY'S CHRONIC SHORTAGE OF TRAVEL FUNDS. NOR IS THERE ANY APPARENT PATTERN IN CHOICE OF SUCCESSORS SO FAR AS KNOWN. ONE INTRIGUING BUT RATHER FAR-OUT SPECULATION IS THAT NE WIN IS EMBARKING ON A SERIES OF PERSONNEL SHAKE-UPS AS PRELIMINARY TO RETIREMENT. A MORE LIKELY EXPLANATION IS THAT HE SIMPLY THINKS MOST OF THE RETIRING AMBASSADORS HAVE HELD THEIR POSITIONS TOO LONG, NO LONGER PRESENT ANY POLITICAL DANGER IF BACK IN BURMA, AND SHOULD GIVE WAY TO OTHERS.

2. DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH DRV (UNCLAS)

GUB HAS ANNOUNCED ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH NORTH VIET-NAM AS OF MAY 28, UPGRADING PREVIOUS RELATIONS AT LEVEL OF CONSULATE-GENERAL. ANNOUNCEMENT DID NOT MENTION RELATIONS WITH SOUTH VIET-NAM, BUT GUB CLEARLY ENVISAGES DIPLOMATIC (RATHER THAN CONSULAR) RELATIONS WHENEVER SAIGON AUTHORITIES ARE PREPARED TO ESTABLISH THEM.

3. STEP UP IN BCP ACTIVITY? (CONF)

RECENT BCP RADIO BROADCASTS HAVE CLAIMED THAT ATTACKS ON BURMA ARMY DURING LATE APRIL AND EARLY MAY IN MONG KAO/TANGYAN REGION WEST OF THE SALWEEN RIVER RESULTED IN BRATH OF SOME 20 TROOPS. OTHER INFORMATION INDICATES AN ADDITIONAL TWENTY SOLDIERS WERE KILLED DURING MAY IN SAME REGION, PRIMARILY WITH COMMAND-DETONATED MINES TO DESTROY ARMY VEHICLES.

COMMENT: BCP MAY BE STEPPING UP ITS MILITARY ATTACKS, DESPITE APPROACHING RAINS, TO OFFSET GUB CLAIMS THAT BCP "ELIMINATED" WITH DEATH OF LEADERS THAKIN ZIN AND THAKIN CHIT IN MARCH AND TO SHOW CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT THE BCP IS ALIVE AND WELL IN THE NORTHEAST.

4. NARCOTICS: PRINCIPAL FIGURE IN LO TRIAL SENTENCED (UNCLAS)

FORMER MIS MAJOR KYAW NYEIN HAS BEEN SENTENCED TO FOUR YEARS FOR ACCEPTING BRIBES FROM LO HSING-HAN. KYAW NYEIN HAS BEEN UNDER HOUSE ARREST SINCE FIRST BEING BROUGHT TO TRIAL OVER A YEAR AND A HALF AGO. HOWEVER, ONLY FOUR DAYS WILL BE DEDUCTED FROM HIS

SENTENCE, REPRESENTING THE BRIEF PERIOD HE SPENT IN JAIL BEFORE BEING RELEASED ON BAIL. KYAW NYEIN, THE PRINCIPAL GUB OFFICIAL TO FACE CRIMINAL CHARGES OVER HIS ASSOCIATION WITH LO, IS APPEALING.

5. NARCOTICS: REHABILITATION PROBLEMS (UNCLAS)

A SERIES OF NEWSPAPER ARTICLES AND COMMENTARIES IN THE PAST WEEK POINT UP SOME SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED IN TREATING AND REHABILITATING DRUG ADDICTS. A REPORT FROM RANGOON'S PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL STATED THAT RANGOON HAS ONLY 499 DRUG ADDICTS REGISTERED (WHICH MUST BE ONLY A FRACTION OF THE TOTAL IN RANGOON), BUT THAT FACILITIES ARE SUCH THAT EVEN THESE CANNOT BE PROPERLY TREATED. THE REMARK THAT YOUNG ADDICTS ARE SPENDING 60 TO 100 KYAT (ABOUT \$10 TO \$15) PER DAY TO MAINTAIN THEIR HABITS, BROUGHT COMMENTARY FROM BURMESE-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS. AN ARTICLE CALLED FOR BETTER EDUCATION PROGRAMS ON BOTH THE PROBLEMS OF DRUG ADDICTION AND THE NSD DRUG LAW; EXPOSURE OF ADDICTS; MORE DOCTORS AND FACILITIES FOR TREATMENT, AND ACTION AGAINST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ACCEPTING BRIBES FROM TRAFFICKERS. APPEARING COINCIDENTALLY WERE A SERIES OF PRESS ARTICLES NOTING THE AVAILABILITY ON THE BLACK MARKET OF PILLS "FOR CURING OPIUM ADDICTS". A RAID ON SEVERAL SHOPS RESULTED IN THE CONFISCATION OF 25,960 PILLS.

COMMENT: THE PILLS WERE NOT SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFIED, BUT WE SUSPECT THEY MAY HAVE BEEN METHADONE, WHICH IS USED ON A LIMITED SCALE FOR DRUG TREATMENT.

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TRSE-00 FRB-03 DEAE-00 JUSE-00 SNM-02 /116 W

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R 290425Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9634
INFO CINCPAC
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 RANGOON 1394

6. EXXON DRILLING "POLITICAL WELL"? (LOU)

DRILLING OF THE FIRST EXXON TEST WELL IN ANDAMAN SEA HAS STOPPED AT 13,800 FEET FOR ANALYSIS OF GEOLOGICAL INFORMATION OBTAINED TO DATE. EXXON SOURCE INDICATES THAT WELL MAY GO DEEPER FOR "POLITICAL REASONS", I.E., TO SATISFY WISHES OF TOP GUB AUTHORITIES RATHER THAN WITH ANY HOPES OF FINDING HYDROCARBONS. THUS FAR, THERE HAVE BEEN NO POSITIVE SIGNS OF PETROLEUM AT THIS WELL SITE.

7. CASUALTY, DAMAGE ESTIMATES RISE IN DELTA CYCLONE (UNCLAS)

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REVISED ESTIMATES INDICATE THE CYCLONE WHICH STRUCK IRRAWADDY DELTA MAY 7 (WEEK 17, ITEM 6) INFLECTED CONSIDERABLY MORE CASUALTIES AND DAMAGE THAN INITIALLY BELIEVED. GUB MAY 23 ISSUED REVISED BUT STILL INCOMPLETE REPORT OF 187 DEATHS COMPARED TO ORIGINAL (UNPUBLISHED) ESTIMATE OF 79; UNOFFICIAL REPORTS PLACE DEATH TOLL AS HIGH AS 250. LOSS AND DAMAGE TO STORED PADDY AND RICE ALSO APPEARS HIGHER THAN FIRST BELIEVED. GUB HAS AUTHORIZED SALE OF DAMAGED STOCKS TO PRIVATE TRADERS AS WELL AS COOPS, AND TRANSPORT OF SUCH DAMAGED STOCKS ACROSS TOWNSHIP LINES. SINCE IT WILL BE EASY AND CHEAP FOR TRADERS TO SECURE DOCUMENTATION SHOWING THAT PADDY OR RICE THEY HOLD IS FROM "DAMAGED STOCKS," THIS ORDER IS TANTAMOUNT TO LIFTING CONTROLS ON RICE TRADE IN LOWER BURMA. RECONSTRUCTION WORK IS IN PROGRESS IN DELTA TOWNS, WITH GUB CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION HAVING SHIFTED MOST OF ITS MATERIAL AND PERSONNEL RESOURCES TO DISASTER AREA. RELIEF FUND ESTABLISHED BY GUB HAS DRAWN FEW CONTRIBUTIONS, WITH ONLY SIGNIFICANT ONES SO FAR BEING DONATION OF APPROXIMATELY K30,000 (US\$4,838) BY BRITISH AND WEST GERMAN GOVERNMENTS.

8. U.S. CONSULTING FIRM SELECTED FOR IDA-FINANCED PROJECT (UNCLAS)

GUB IRRIGATION DEPARTMENT SELECTED U.S. FIRM, ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS INCORPORATED (ECI) AS CONSULTANT FOR IDA-FINANCED NYAUNG-GYUT MULTIPURPOSE PROJECT. PROJECT, TO BE BACKED BY \$35 MILLION IDA LOAN, INCLUDES CONSTRUCTION OF DAM FOR IRRIGATION AND HYDRO-POWER ON MYITTHA RIVER NEAR KYAUKSE, MANDALAY DIVISION. ECI RECENTLY COMPLETED CONTRACT WITH GUB ELECTRIC SUPPLY CORPORATION AND ENGINEER FOR THAT PROJECT EXPECTED TO RETURN TO RANGOON IN ABOUT TWO WEEKS TO BEGIN WORK UNDER NEW CONTRACT. THIS IS SECOND U.S. ENGINEERING FIRM TO WIN GUB CONSULTING CONTRACT WITHIN TWO MONTHS (MALCOLM PIRNIE INC. WAS RECENTLY SELECTED AS CONSULTANT FOR ADB-FINANCED PHYGGYI RESERVOIR PROJECT). THIS ADDS TO U.S. COMMERCIAL PRESENCE IN BURMA AND ENHANCES PROSPECTS FOR SALES OF U.S. MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT FOR THESE MULTILATERAL-FINANCED PROJECTS.

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Message Attributes

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